

JB PRITZKER, GOVERNOR · JERRY COSTELLO II, DIRECTOR

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ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE SHARES STRIDES MADE IN 2022

Springfield, IL – Today, Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) shared accomplishments made in 2022 to support our state’s number one industry. From the opening of the state’s first craft grow facility, to increasing Future Farmers of America (FFA) funding to ensure the future of agriculture in our state, to the success of the state fairs, great strides were made to further the success of agriculture in Illinois.

“Illinois has always been—and will always be—an agricultural state. And this year, we continued to lay the groundwork for a thriving, sustainable agricultural industry for generations into the future,” **said Governor JB Pritzker**. “From waiving all FFA dues for agricultural education students to issuing hundreds of cannabis licenses to social equity applicants, 2022 was full of firsts—and we’re only getting started. My administration remains laser-focused on growing and supporting our number one industry, so that farmers and workers have the resources they need to put food on the table for the people of Illinois.”

“In Illinois, our agricultural industry powers the economy and feeds the world. Thank you to the Department of Agriculture that provides resources and support to the skilled farmers, producers, transporters, and workers who make this possible,” **said Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton**. “The amazing accomplishments and growth we saw this year will provide momentum for increased productivity and entrepreneurship in 2023 and beyond.”

“This year has brought much success to the current landscape of agriculture in Illinois, but also the future of agriculture in Illinois,” **said Illinois Department of Agriculture Director Jerry Costello**. “With the support of the Pritzker administration, agriculture in Illinois continues to grow. The Department looks forward to moving our state’s number one industry forward as we enter 2023.”

Supporting Vulnerable Communities and Working Toward Justice

- Issued 88 Craft Grow licenses, 54 Infuser licenses, and 189 Transporter licenses to date. 85% of all new licenses under the CRTA are equity by ownership.

- First Social Equity Craft Grow licensee successfully commenced business operations. Located in Rockford, Star Buds is 66% Black-owned.
- Two licensees were issued operational Infuser permits and successfully commenced business operations. Located in Pekin, Illinois, Krown is 51% woman-owned; MME, Inc., in Homewood, Illinois was also cleared to begin infusing operations. Both businesses are [Social Equity licensees](#).
- Implemented state hemp program in time for the 2019 crop season. Illinois is currently entering our fourth growing season with 2,734 acres planted in 2020.
- Approved 10 community colleges to participate in the Cannabis Community College Vocational Pilot Program.
- Signed landmark legislation creating a Farmer Disparity Study to identify and examine the hurdles for minority populations entering the agriculture industry. The study is now underway, facilitated by the Department and research led by the University of Illinois, Southern Illinois University, Illinois State University and Western Illinois University.
- Bureau of Cannabis materials and Livestock Management Facility Training translated to Spanish. The state's pesticide exam is currently being translated.
- Entered into a \$14.4 million Local Food Purchase Cooperative Agreement with the USDA to increase markets for disadvantaged farmers and to create sustainable infrastructure to connect with disadvantaged communities.

Addressing Climate Change and Leading the Green Economy

- Providing financial assistance for cover crop adoption through the Fall Covers for Spring Savings Program with a minimum of 140,000 acres available in December 2022. To date, over 300,000 acres are enrolled in the program.
- Record apiary growth in Illinois, with over 650 new beekeepers registering in 2022, protecting our pollinators and their positive environmental impact.
- Implemented pesticide-related rules making Illinois one of the most stringent in the nation on the application of the pesticide Dicamba.
- Operated plastic pesticide container-recycling program with over 2 million pounds of plastic collected and properly disposed of unwanted and unused pesticides protecting Illinois' waterways.
- Pritzker Administration secured \$12.9 million in new funding to support the development of 40 new conservation planning positions across the state.
- The IDOA/NRCS partnership leverages \$3.5 million Illinois state Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy funds with \$9.4 million of federal funds from the USDA/NRCS to deliver over \$12.9 million in new funding to support conservation planning and NLRs staffing and programming.
- Worked with the Indiana Department of Agriculture to be jointly awarded \$7.9 million for a bi-state partnership that brings together Indiana, Illinois, and 43 partners to work to improve the overall health of the iconic Kankakee and Iroquois watersheds.
- Launched a statewide study of Illinois producers and conservation professionals—in partnership with the US Climate Alliance—to increase the understanding of constraints

affecting adoption of new farm and land management practices that impact the climate and NLRs goals.

- Advanced the creation of the Illinois Climate Smart Partnership and the Illinois Climate Smart Institute. These two initiatives are aimed at raising awareness of carbon capturing or limiting release of carbon by generating new educational and training opportunities to advance evidence-based climate-smart agricultural practices throughout Illinois.

State Fairs & Fairgrounds

- Illinois State Fair saw the highest attended fair since industry attendance calculation were put into effect, beating previous records also set under the Pritzker administration. Overall attendance reached 636,700 and weekend attendance during the fair saw an increase of nearly 95,000 people over 2021.
- Celebrated the 100th anniversary of the DuQuoin State Fair with over 170,100 fairgoers. Recognized the tradition of standardbred horse racing at the fair by injecting an additional \$100,000 into horseracing purses for Illinois bred horses.
- Hosted vaccine clinics on the fairgrounds inside of the Orr Building for much of 2021 with more than 66,000 vaccines given.
- Capital projects on the Du Quoin State Fairgrounds continued, including improvements to the grandstand, main gate, and roads.
- Capital projects on the Illinois State Fairgrounds continued, including improvements to the Multi-Purpose Arena, 8th Street, Reisch Pavilion (Illinois State Fair Foundation), and building and barn roofs.

Securing the Future of Agriculture

- In the 2022-2023 school year, FFA dues were waived for every student taking agriculture education classes across Illinois. The \$550,000 appropriation is spearheaded by State Senator Doris Turner.
- FFA is a national organization for young adults interested in leadership and agriculture.
- It has been a priority of the Pritzker Administration to make farming and agriculture more accessible, and these dollars help to diversify the make-up of the FFA organization.
- The elimination of dues makes Illinois a FFA affiliation membership state, ensuring every student enrolled in agricultural education will have FFA membership dues automatically paid, making them a FFA member.
- This increases the number of FFA students in Illinois from 23,000 members to nearly 37,000 members.

Marketing Illinois Agriculture

- In FY22, \$102,637,471 in actual and projected sales was generated for Illinois agricultural companies as a result of direct buyer/seller introductions at in-person events.
- Other achievements included agreements between the State of Illinois and foreign dignitaries; co-sponsored marketing events via strategic partnerships; buyers missions and tours, directly introducing Illinois agriculture companies to qualified buyers; Illinois Pavilions at trade shows. In-person shows are starting to return since the pandemic, which will allow for increased numbers.

- Hosted Directors of Agriculture from 14 midwestern states in Chicago, highlighting Illinois agriculture and Chicago's vibrant urban farming community.
- Re-launched the "Homegrown by Heroes" branding program, with 32 veterans enrolled to date.
- Nationally ranked #1 in soy production, #2 in corn production, and #4 in pork production, offering world-class genetics to domestic and international partners.
- Nationally ranked #1 in food processing with \$150 billion in sales and employing over 86,000 people.

Illinois Agriculture on the Global Stage

- Governor Pritzker signed a commitment of \$2.6 billion in soybean and corn purchases by the Taiwanese Government.
- The agreement is the second multi-billion-dollar agricultural deal made between the two countries during the Governor's time in office.
- The letter of intent agrees to the sale of over \$2 billion of Illinois soybeans and \$600 million of Illinois corn over the next two years.
- The sale follows the 2019 two-year agreement that authorized over \$2.2 billion in crop sales. The sales will take place over 2023 and 2024.

Accelerating Economic Growth and Creating Jobs

- Cannabis production industry now employs nearly 5,000 people in Illinois.
- Through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES), awarded \$1.2 million to small and mid-sized meat and poultry establishments for capacity expansion and \$3.5 million to livestock producers impacted by pandemic related plant interruptions.

Improving Health Care Quality and Affordability

- Advanced the Farm Family Resource Initiative (FFRI), allowing for expansion of farmer stress-related mental health initiatives from a 6-county pilot program to a state-wide program connecting farmers with mental health resources and providers.
- Director Costello toured the state of Illinois making stops in Springfield, Edwardsville, Champaign, Peoria, Quad Cities, Kankakee and Carbondale during Mental Health Awareness Month in May to promote FFRI.

Advancing Public Safety

- Worked with the agricultural community to create an online training course for the handling of anhydrous ammonia, protecting both growers and the public. Over 12,000 growers completed the program to date.
- Ensured farmers markets were considered an essential service throughout the pandemic, providing a safe experience for consumers to purchase of fresh, local products with SNAP food assistance.
- Inspected over 179 meat and poultry establishments in the State ensuring food safety for consumers.

- Veterinary team worked directly with USDA to manage and mitigate avian influenza cases in backyard poultry flocks. No commercial cases in Illinois to date.
- Department led pesticide training program, in collaboration with University of Illinois Extension, pivoted from in-person to on-line format within weeks to provide a seamless means for applicators to receive licensure. This created no gap in services to the agricultural community and now both online and classroom training and testing are available to increase access.

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